

REMARKS

By the above actions, minor errors in the specification and claim 2 have been corrected, and claim 1 has been amended based upon discussions with the Examiner and his Primary Examiner held at a personal interview conducted on September 9, 2004, the substance of which is set forth below in accordance with 37 CFR § 1.133 and MPEP § 713.04. Based on the agreement reached at the personal interview and as reflected in the Interview Summary issued at the personal interview, the action taken above should result in withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and action to that effect is requested.

In particular, as was pointed out at the interview and acknowledged by the Examiner, the prior art patents, such as that to Bjornson, Barnard et al., etc., utilized to reject the claims as originally presented, are all reactive systems in that, once a failure occurs, they analyze the cause of the failure and then determine how best to correct it and hopefully prevent its reoccurrence. However, the present invention not only is able to function reactively, but unlike the systems of the prior art references, the invention is also able to function proactively to take actions designed to forestall occurrence of a failure. In this connection the Examiners' attention was directed to, e.g., paragraph [0039] & [0040] which describe how a feedback control is used which reacts "when maintenance standards deviate from predetermined objectives as determined by the equipment controlling system" resulting in the performance of a systematic analysis by which solutions are found "for maintaining system functionality and for preventing functional failures." This is a definite improvement over prior systems and one not taught or suggested by the prior art.

Therefore, in the absence of any new and more pertinent prior art being discovered, reconsideration and allowance of this application is hereby requested.

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise, which could be eliminated through discussions with applicant's representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

Lastly, it is noted that a separate Extension of Time Petition accompanies this response along with payment of the requisite extension of time fee. However, should that

petition become separated from this Amendment, then this Amendment should be construed as containing such a petition and the required payment applied to Deposit Account No. 192380 (740116-353).

Respectfully submitted,



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